



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2120

RICHMOND 23218-2120

SNP Memo #2013-2014-10

TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons
School Nutrition Programs

FROM: Catherine Digilio Grimes, MS, RDN, LDN, SNS
Director, Office of School Nutrition Programs

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Digilio Grimes".

DATE: March 27, 2014

SUBJECT: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) - Additional Clarification

Superintendent's Memo # 066-14 published on March 21, 2014 issued guidance on the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). CEP provides an alternative to household applications for free and reduced price meals.

The purpose of this memo is to provide additional guidance and clarification to the Community Eligibility Provision.

Some Key Points:

1. School division, school site or a group of schools **MUST** have a minimum of forty percent (40%) of the *Identified Students* eligible for free meals as of April 1st. Total free and reduced percentages cannot be used.
2. Schools/divisions are not allowed to collect meal applications for students attending the sites participating in CEP. Therefore, individual student eligibility is not available for frequently used funding formulas (i.e. Title 1).
3. Claiming percentages based on the number of *identified students* are to be used for reimbursement in the school/division.
4. The *identified student* percentage is multiplied by a factor of 1.6 to arrive at the free claiming percentage. The number of meals served is then multiplied by the free claiming percentage to determine the actual amount of the federal reimbursement. The difference between the free claiming percentage and 100% results in the paid claiming percentage.
5. Use the [CEP Calculator](#) to anticipate the level of federal reimbursement and then assess the financial impact on your school nutrition program (Attachment B in Superintendent's Memo).
6. Meal costs in excess of the total federal reimbursement must be covered through nonfederal sources.
7. Dates to remember:

- a. April 1st – The *identified student* population must be as of April 1st. Site level data collected for the Verification Report can be the preliminary source data used to determine the *identified student* populations. The *identified student* population must be updated to reflect any additional students directly certified or determined to be categorically eligible by means other than meal application as of April 1, 2014.
- b. April 15th – All school divisions must submit school level information on the *CEP Preliminary Data Collection Worksheet* to VDOE via the snpwebdoc@doe.virginia.gov mailbox.

Name the file:

Division Number–Name Date saved (use YYYYMMDD format) - CEP Data

Example: **001-Accomack 20140327- CEP data**

Some Questions and Answers

1. **Question:** Are school divisions who do not intend to apply for or implement CEP required to submit a list of schools that would be potentially eligible?

Answer: YES. All school divisions with at least one or more eligible schools must submit this information to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Office of School Nutrition Programs. The list of potentially eligible schools must include:

- a. A list of schools that meet or exceed the 40 percent *Identified Student* threshold.
- b. A list of schools that have *Identified Student* percentages between 30 and 40 percent. (nearly eligible schools)

Attachment D [CEP Preliminary Data Collection Worksheet](#) found in the Superintendent's Memo #066-14 is to be used to list the eligible schools and then submit electronically to DOE at snpwebdoc@doe.virginia.gov. In accordance with USDA regulations and guidance for CEP a list of all eligible schools must be published.

2. **Question:** If a division does not have schools that neither meets the 40% *Identified Student* threshold nor the 30-40% *Identified Student* threshold, are they required to submit a list to VDOE?

Answer: YES, if a school division does not have potentially eligible schools, indicate “NO SCHOOLS ELIGIBLE” on the *CEP Preliminary Data Collection Worksheet* and submit electronically to DOE at snpwebdoc@doe.virginia.gov. This way we will know that every school division reviewed and assessed its potential eligibility.

3. **Question:** How does a school division actually apply to participate in CEP for SY 2014-2015?

Answer: VDOE School Nutrition staff will review documentation submitted by the school division to ensure they meet the minimum *identified student* percentage, participate in both the NSLP and SBP, and have a record of administering the meal program in accordance with program regulations. Once this review is complete, VDOE will contact the division to determine if they wish to apply for CEP. At that time, the school division would be required to submit additional information. Detailed guidance and training will be provided to all eligible school divisions.

4. **Question:** What is the lowest possible percentage of *identified students* that would allow for claiming all meals at the free rate?

Answer: 62.50%. Use the [CEP Calculator to Assess and Project the Monthly Federal Reimbursement](#) to anticipate the level of Federal reimbursement and then assess the financial impact on your program (Attachment B in Superintendent's Memo).

5. **Question:** Can a CEP school or division still collect meal applications to use in gathering social economic data for other programs (i.e., Title 1, E-rate etc.)?

Answer: NO. CEP schools/divisions are not permitted to collect applications for free or reduced price meals. The [U. S. Department of Education Guidance - the Community Eligibility Provision](#) provides guidance specifically for Title 1 and CEP. (See Attachment C in the Superintendent's Memo)

If you have questions or need further information, contact the school nutrition programs specialist assigned to your division or Office of School Nutrition Program staff at (804) 225-2074.

CDG/idl